

## **II. PURPOSE OF TRAILWAY PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires consideration of the environmental effects of proposed Federal actions, in this case the NPS's proposal to select a specific alignment for the Ice Age NST route across Waupaca and Portage Counties. Additionally, the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) requires consideration of the effects of proposed State actions, in this case the development and management of trail segments on WDNR properties, the making of grants under the Stewardship Fund program for acquisition of lands for the Ice Age NST, the acceptance of lands for permanent dedication, and the acquisition of lands for the Ice Age NST.

This assessment serves to:

- A. Comply with all provisions regarding environmental considerations and public involvement required by NEPA and WEPA by carrying out an open, public planning process to determine the ideal location for the trail, and to identify and address public issues and concerns.
- B. Comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
- C. Comply with consultation requirements established in the Endangered Species Act.
- D. Comply with Executive Order 11988--Floodplain Management--and Executive Order 11990--Protection of Wetlands.
- E. Provide information on the physical and social environment through which the trail passes for local trail clubs and the county to use as they plan the physical location, construction, and subsequent maintenance of the trail.
- F. Foster public involvement in developing and managing the trail, including recognition of the trail by public and private land use planning groups.
- G. Comply with required state designations and approvals:
  - 1. The designated Ice Age NST corridor will be approved by the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board thereby establishing a project area, and enabling State funds, including the Stewardship funds to be used to acquire land for the trail.
  - 2. The Natural Resources Board must approve land acquisition when an acquisition equals or exceeds \$150,000 (NR 1.41(1)(a), Wisconsin Administrative Code).

3. Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter 23.09 (2) d, gives the WDNR approval to acquire lands for the Ice Age Trail.
4. Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter 23.09 (2q) c, gives the WDNR approval to provide grants for the acquisition of lands for the Ice Age Trail, through the Stewardship Program.
5. Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter 23.17, designates the Ice Age Trail, as provided for in 16 U.S.C. 1244(a)(10), plus the land adjacent to each side of that trail designated by the WDNR, as a State Scenic Trail, to be known as the "Ice Age Trail".
6. Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter 23.293, allows the transfer of land to the WDNR for the Ice Age Trail, through State Ice Age Trail area dedication.